

TEACHING CHARACTER

THROUGH THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM

A CROSS-CURRICULA APPROACH
TO TEACHING CHARACTER

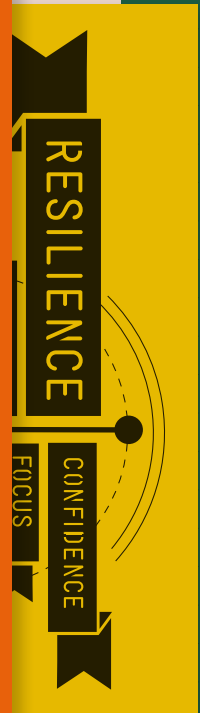
INSPIRING A NATION

MAIN NARRATIVE

VIRTUE: RESILIENCE – SUBJECT: HISTORY



THE
JUBILEE CENTRE
FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES



WINSTON CHURCHILL

On 3rd September, after a German invasion of Poland, Britain declared war on Germany. So began World War II.

Winston Churchill was appointed first Lord of the Admiralty and a member of the war cabinet by Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. He believed Churchill's experience would be vitally important in the war ahead. This experience, on May 10th 1940, prompted King George VI to appoint Churchill as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

Churchill knew the importance of **cooperation** and instantly formed a **coalition** cabinet of leaders from the Labour, Liberal and Conservative parties. He had built a career as a successful public speaker, speaking in the Houses of Parliament and on the battle field. This would become one of his greatest **assets** in the fight against the Axis Powers.

On May 13th 1940, he addressed the House of Commons:

'We have before us an ordeal of the most **grievous** kind. We have before us many, many long months of struggle and of suffering. You ask, what is our policy? I can say: It is to wage war, by sea, land and air, with all our might and with all the strength that God can give us; to wage war against a monstrous **tyranny**, never surpassed in the dark, **lamentable** catalogue of human crime. That is our policy. You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word: It is victory, victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory, however long and hard the road may be; for without victory, there is no survival.'

He received the full backing of the Members of Parliament. Churchill made a personal **plea**, saying, "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat."

By June 1940 German forces occupied large amounts of France. Morale was extremely low in Britain, and amongst Allied soldiers. People could not see where a victory would come from. The British public and soldiers knew that they must be courageous to keep fighting, but it was difficult to forget the horrors of a previous world war. Families had lost fathers, husbands, brothers, sons, uncles and grandfathers. Churchill knew he would have to inspire the nation to keep fighting against the Nazi regime and not give up, even if it meant the loss of many more lives and many more years of fighting.

In June 1940, Churchill gave one of his most **iconic** speeches:

'We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be. We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.'



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"SUCCESS IS THE
ABILITY TO GO
FROM ONE FAILURE
TO ANOTHER WITH
NO LOSS OF
ENTHUSIASM."

- WINSTON CHURCHILL

The world listened and a nation began to be inspired. Churchill led the country and his speeches helped the public to believe they were fighting for justice against an evil tyranny. However, things did not get better quickly. In September 1940, Nazi planes dropped bombs on British cities, in what has come to be known as the Blitz, and civilians, particularly those in London, became the target of German air raids. More soldiers were sent to fight for the Allied forces in Europe, Africa and Asia. Children in large British cities were **evacuated** to the countryside, away from their parents and friends. Some would never see their parents again.

Churchill understood the importance of not giving up. A year later, during a visit to his old school, he gave another inspirational speech encouraging the nation to stay determined:

‘Never give in, never give in, never, never, never—in nothing, great or small, large or petty – never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never **yield** to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy.’

Churchill’s speeches alone would not win the war for the Allied forces, but the raising of morale of the British public was very important. The war would not end until 1945, and there were many occasions where Churchill privately questioned the war and whether or not it was actually winnable. He and the British public had made huge sacrifices to continue to fight. Finally, the Allied forces would be victorious. On 8th May 1945 (‘Victory in Europe’ Day) he said:

‘The lights went out and the bombs came down. But every man, woman and child in the country had no thought of quitting the struggle. London can take it. So we came back after long months from the jaws of death, out of the mouth of hell, while all the world wondered. When shall the reputation and faith of this generation of English men and women fail? I say that in the long years to come not only will the people of this island but of the world, wherever the bird of freedom chirps in human hearts, look back to what we’ve done and they will say do not despair, do not yield to violence and tyranny, march straightforward and die if need be-unconquered.’

As the war came to an end, Churchill was defeated in a general election by Clement Attlee. Churchill left his post as Prime Minister having guided Britain to victory in World War II, a task which looked very unlikely when he took control in 1940. Victory came at a heavy cost as 383,600 British military personnel and over 60,000 British civilians died. In 1953, Queen Elizabeth II knighted Churchill making him Sir Winston Churchill. He died in January 1965. Many world leaders attended his state funeral and crowds lined the streets of London. He was given a hero’s farewell. Churchill inspired a nation during its darkest days, and in response, in 2002, the British public voted Churchill as the greatest Briton to ever live.

GLOSSARY

ASSETS

a useful or valuable thing

COALITION

a temporary alliance

COOPERATION

working together to the same goal

EVACUATED

remove someone from a place of danger to a safer place

GRIEVOUS

something very bad or serious

ICONIC

very famous or popular

LAMENTABLE

very bad

PLEA

a request made in an urgent or emotional way

TYRANNY

a cruel use of power

YIELD

to give way to arguments, demands, or pressure